



# ALASKA PEOPLE

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## Grade retention questions answered

What happens to my pay if I am reduced in grade? That is a very important question for an employee whose grade is about to be affected by a reduction-in-force action or a reclassification of the employee's position. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 provides some relief for employees who are affected by these actions--namely grade and pay retention--if they meet certain eligibility requirements.

Employees affected by reductions-in-force are eligible for grade retention for two years only if the employee has served in a position(s) for 52 consecutive weeks or more at a grade or grades higher than the position in which placed, whether or not in the same agency or position. An employee affected by a reduction-in-force due to the reclassification of his or her position is entitled to retained grade provided that the position was classified at a higher grade level for one year or more. The amount of time the employee served in the position does not matter in this case.

During the second year of the retained grade period, the employee remains as in the same grade and step and will receive any with-in-grade increases and comparability increases due in the retained grade, except for merit pay employees.

Grade retention entitlement ceases when an employee:

- has a break in service of one workday or more;
- is demoted for personal cause or at the employee's request;
- is placed in a position where the grade is equal to or higher than the retained grade;
- declines a reasonable offer or a position, the grade of which is equal to or higher than, the retained grade. Conditions for a "reasonable offer" are: 1. Offer is in writing with a copy of the position description attached. 2. Must be a permanent position for which the employee meets qualification standards. 3. Must be in an agency, but not necessarily in the same agency. 4. Must be fulltime or no less than what the employee had worked previously. 5. Must be in the same commuting area; or
- elected in writing to have the benefits of grade

retention terminated.

An employee whose rate of pay would otherwise be reduced is entitled to pay retention as a result of:

- expiration of the two-year period of grade retention;
- reduction-in-force or reclassification when the employee does not meet the eligibility requirements for grade retention;
- a reduction of elimination of special rates;
- placement for a special rate position to a non-special rate position or to a lower rate position;
- placement in a different pay schedule; or
- placement in a formal employee development program utilized government-wide such as an upward mobility program.

Under retained pay, an employee is entitled to the lowest scheduled rate of basic pay in the employee's grade after the action is taken which is equal to or exceeds his current rate of basic pay and will be placed in the step appropriate to that rate. If there is no such rate, then the employee is entitled to retain his or her current rate of basic pay or 150 percent of the maximum rate of basic pay for the employee's grade at the time of the increase. Eventually, the maximum rate of the employee's grade will exceed the retained pay through comparability increases. When this happens, the employee's rate of pay will be set at the maximum rate and pay retention terminates.

Pay retention entitlement ceases to apply to any employee who:

- has a break in service of one workday or more;
- is demoted for personal cause or at the employee's request;
- is entitled to a rate of basic pay which is equal to or higher than the employee's retained rate; or
- declines a reasonable offer of a position that rate of which is equal to or higher than the employee's retained rate.

This covers only the basic regulations on retained grade and pay. For additional information, consult the Federal Personnel Manual, Chapter 536 or call your Personnel Office.



# BLM issues coal lease

It took more than 30 years but Edwin Read finally received his coal lease from the Bureau of Land Management on March 22, 1983.

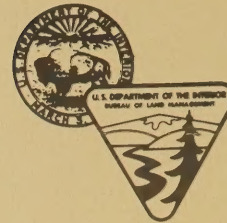
The 2,560 acre Jarvis Creek Coal Mine, located southeast of Fairbanks, will be operated by Owens and Loveless.

The Jarvis Creek odyssey began in the early 1950s with an application for a prospecting permit submitted by Edwin Read. The application proceeded through the adjudication process during most of the major changes to occur in land management—land freezes, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the d-2 controversy.

In addition, the rules governing

coal leasing changed over the years. At one time, cadastral surveys were required before leases could be issued. Public meetings held to discuss the effects of the coal lease on the local population were held. The lease proposal was favorably received although there was some concern that recreational access of the right-of-way would be cut off. Assurances were made that local residents would continue to have access to the right-of-way.

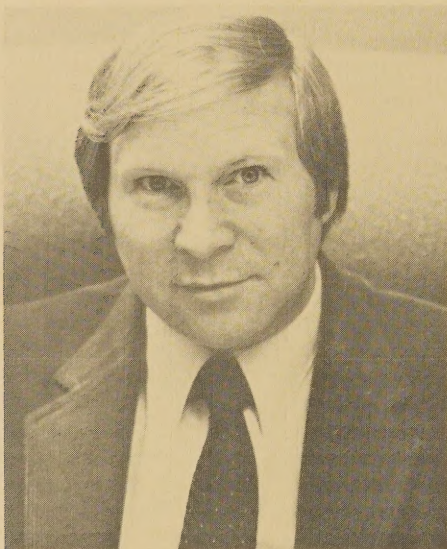
Two other coal lease applications are being adjudicated by BLM, both by Morgan Coal Company of Indianapolis, Indiana. "It may take as long to process these two leases as it did to process the Creek lease," says Daryll.



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## Conduct, discipline, and performance



By far, the vast majority of our employees are productive men and women who never become involved in a disciplinary action. But, as in any large organization, there are those who require corrective management action. These fall into two broad categories: Those that deal with conduct and those that pertain to performance.

The most common are disciplinary actions concerning conduct. The incident that results in the discipline must

have an impact on the organization. If there is no "nexus" or relationship between the misbehavior and the productivity of the mission, a disciplinary action cannot be supported. Disciplinary actions include oral admonishments, letters of admonishment or warning, letters or reprimand, suspensions, demotions and removals. The appropriateness of the severity of the punishment is determined primarily by the seriousness of the offense and the prior disciplinary record. Being late for work without an acceptable explanation may result in an oral admonishment, while theft of government property or striking a supervisor may be grounds for removal. However, discipline is usually progressive. The first offense of insubordination, for example, may only support a letter of reprimand, while subsequent offenses for the same type of incident may be grounds for a suspension and finally removal. The results of the discipline should be immediate and everlasting. There is no training period involved.

The second category relates to performance. Every employee has a PIPR that lists what elements are critical to his or her position, and by what standards and objectives those elements will be measured. If a supervisor determines an employee's performance on one or more critical elements is

unsatisfactory, they may issue a warning letter. This letter states what element(s) is unsatisfactory, gives examples of the poor performance, describes what will be expected in the future, and tells what will be done to assist the employee to reach an acceptable level of competence. If that level is not reached, the supervisor issues a letter that proposes the removal or demotion of the employee. Unlike conduct where the results are expected to be immediate, the employee is given a reasonable amount of time to reach and demonstrate competence.

Both types of actions described above are taken by the employee's supervisory chair, not the personnel office. However, to assure that employees' rights are protected and regulatory procedures are followed, the personnel office must be involved to provide advice and assistance. These actions apply only to career employees.

Those on temporary appointments and those who have not completed a probationary period are not entitled to the same rights and procedures, as they have no "property rights" to the jobs. If they do not demonstrate those qualities that would indicate that they will be a contributing federal employee, they are removed. For additional information, contact Jim Pooley of the Personnel Office, ASO, at 271-3171.



# One exceptional lady

Evelyn Russell is an exceptional lady. She attacks her job as a miscellaneous documents examiner with a zeal that few can match. She gardens, enjoys outdoor activities and, she's handicapped.

Many of her co-workers don't know she's handicapped and Evelyn likes it that way. "I don't expect any favors just because I have a handicap. I wasn't hired for the way I walk," she says. "I was hired to do a job."

And do a job she does. Since joining State Selections in 1982, Evelyn has instituted some procedures that make her and her co-workers' jobs a little easier. She developed an acreage control system, a "super zap" procedure which reduces computer record changes from hours to one entry and does audits and research as needed.

Evelyn was a little reluctant to discuss her experiences. But with some urging from co-workers and her nomination as Federal Handicapped Employee of the Year, she agreed. "If sharing my experiences will help one person to get up and try, then it's worth it," she says.

She was born in Illinois. A collision with a bus at age 19 required her to learn to walk again and learn to live with pain. Over the years, Evelyn has had 16 operations to correct the damage from the accident. She's been pronounced dead three times, but each time she's come back.

In 1980, Evelyn's arm and spine ceased to work. She became the fourth person in the United States to become "bionic" and the first to recover from paralysis, get up and walk. Doctors removed damaged bone and nerves and replaced them with bionic implants that operate her arm and part of her spine and reduces some of the pain. Although she has limited use of her arm and spine and fights bouts of intense pain, the operation was termed a success.

"It takes willpower to get out of bed each morning. It's easy to stay in bed and vegetate," says Evelyn. "I don't use pain pills. I just turn up the voltage on my transmitter and use self hypnosis. Once in a while a flare up is too much to handle, but it usually doesn't last more than a month or so."

Despite her handicap, Evelyn earned a degree in elementary education from Cochise College in Arizona, put two and half years toward a physician's assistant degree and earned a certificate in retail store management.



She's worked as a cook, farmer, narcotics clerk at a Illinois hospital, billing clerk, seamstress, supervisor, police dispatcher and managed the family-owned grocery store.

Evelyn and her husband John are building a house in Wasilla. In addition to spending time with her daughters, Irene and Evey, Evelyn hopes to teach outdoor activities to the handicapped.

Her nomination as Federal Handicapped Employee of the Year is based on her outstanding performance in her job plus her positive attitude toward life and her particular handicap.

"When you're handed a physical obstacle, you have to learn to go around it. Handicapped is a frame of mind," says Evelyn. "It takes a lot of energy to constantly inform yourself and others about your disability. It's much better to direct your energies into your abilities."

Evelyn's positive attitude and her outstanding performance in her job contribute to BLM's success. But it also shows what you can do to overcome physical limitations if you have the will to try. Evelyn Russell as that will. She's an exceptional lady.

## ADO geared for field exam season

Twelve BLMers in six teams have set in motion the 1983 field examination season for Native allotments in and around Emmonak and St. Marys. Lou Waller, ADO McGrath area resource manager, is directing the program that will run through August 15. Letters have been sent to allottees in head regions asking them or their representatives to be available during the time that BLM will be in this area.

The field examiners are realty and natural resource specialists who will alternate on a 10-day shift working in the field followed by a similar period in their offices. Two teams of examiners each with a helicopter and support crew will operate from base camps at Emmonak and St. Marys. The hope to conduct 850 field exams throughout the area which includes Kotlik, Mountain Village and Pitkas Point.

Participating field examiners are

Bob Hale, Martin Hansen, Russ Bloom, Monna Ivey, Metlitta White, Stan Nevak, Cliff Ells, Mark Phillips, Bill Peake, Dwight Hovland, Jan Sosnowski, Carl Neufelder and Meg Jensen.

The examiners accompany allotment applicants or their designated representatives to the allotment site by helicopter. After staking the corner of the allotment, the examiner will photograph the site, draw a map of the area and take notes for the preparation of the legal description which will be written later.

These procedures establish the legal requirements for future cadastral survey of the allotment.

Room and board for the St. Marys field exam teams have been contracted out. Teachers' housing has been leased from the school district for the Emmonak crews. ADO will send food, supplies and fuel to both these camps.



# Where the action is

A small mountain of letters and parcels flows through the ASO Mail Room every day. Myriads of letters to be filed, manuals to be updated and forms to be distributed all wait for attention from the five member staff.

"We mail out about 500 letters a day," says Margaret Fitzhugh, state records manager. "That doesn't include all of the packages and the interoffice mail that we deliver every day."

Margaret and her staff—Rod Harvey, Bonnie Edgerly, Harry Kugler and Thomas Gainer—put in a full day managing the mail and the other jobs they do like updating the BLM manuals, preparing instruction and information memos, stocking all of the forms needed to BLM-Alaska running and maintaining Central Files.

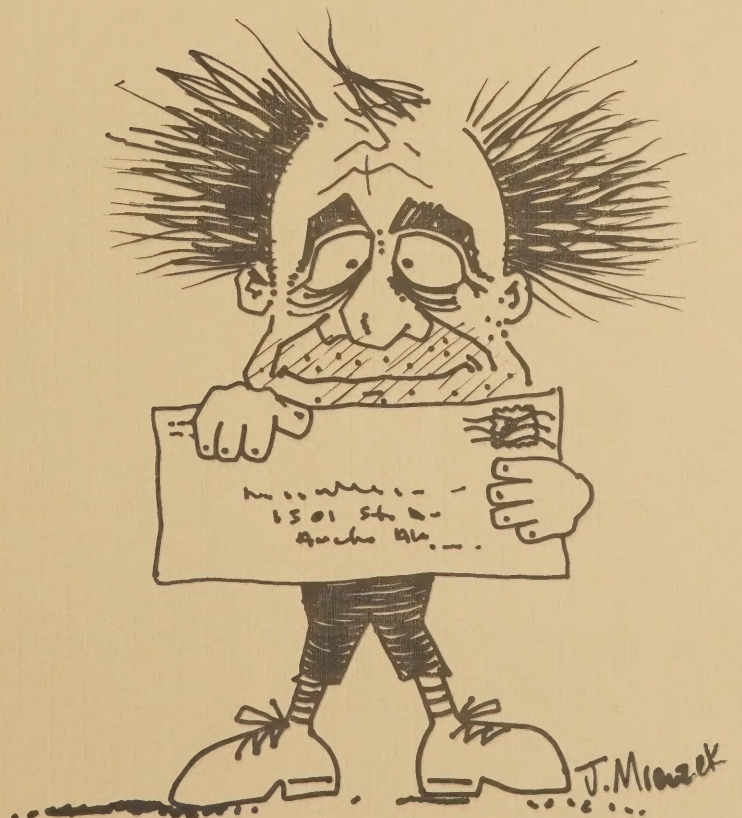
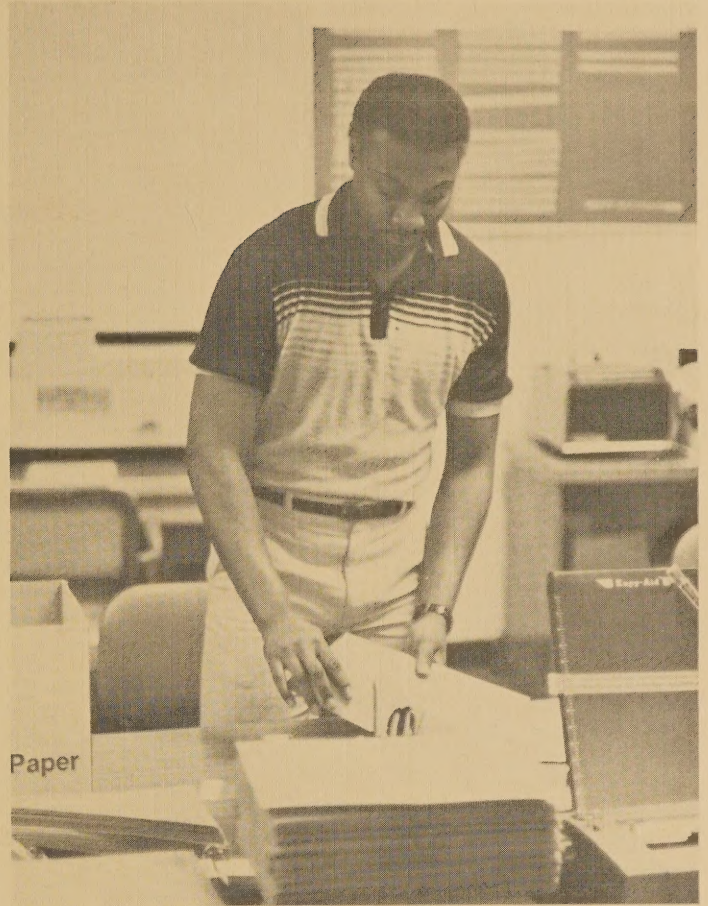
"It keeps us busy," says Margaret. "Mondays and Tuesdays are the worst. Everything sent on Friday comes in and has to be distributed. The mail is usually piled up pretty high around here."

No matter how busy they are, the Mail Room staff is always ready to help an office in need. They routinely mail out CONVEYANCE NEWS and ALASKA PEOPLE as well as special packages that need immediate delivery.

All in all, although it's not the most exciting office in BLM, without the Mail Room very little would be accomplished. It's where the action is.









# Joe Jones heads mineral division



Joe Jones has been named Deputy State Director for Mineral Resources in Alaska by BLM Director Robert F. Burford. Jones was formerly with the Minerals Management Service, which was merged with BLM in December of last year.

"By bringing this position into the top management team at the Alaska state office level," Burford said, "we significantly strengthen the Bureau's management capability. Establishment of a strong team will assure the public of our commitment to true multiple-use management of the nation's public lands." Burford who named deputy state directors in each of the BLM's eleven other

state offices, said that the move further implements the BLM's new minerals policy.

Alaska State Director for BLM, Curtis McVee said of Jones' appointment: "Joe Jones is well qualified to lead this new management team. We've worked together since 1976 when he became manager of the Alaska Regional Office of USGS for Onshore-Outer Continental Shelf operations. Joe is an expert in his field and I welcome his appointment.

Jones, who will report directly to McVee, will direct the overall energy and minerals management and leasing functions within Alaska. Responsibilities include resource evaluation, mineral land classification and approval and supervision of all oil and gas and mining activities on Federal lands where minerals are leased or managed.

## New assignments in mineral division

The merger of the Minerals Management Service Onshore Division with BLM is almost complete. Some 11 positions were filled in the new Minerals Division after the Personnel Management Committee met in Denver earlier

in April. New assignments in the Minerals Division include:

--George Hall, physical scientist, Branch of Solids and Fluids, ASO

--Boyd Bennett, Regulatory Officer, Branch of Solids and Fluids, ASO

--Horace Sanders, staff position, Division of Minerals Resources, ASO.

--Earl Boone, geologist/mining engineer, Branch of Solids and Fluids, ASO

--John Benson, program analyst, Division of Minerals Resources, ASO

--Bob Sorenson, Chief, Branch of Minerals Adjudication, ASO

--George Schmidt, Mining Engineer, Branch of Solids and Fluids, ASO

--James Callahan, Assistant District Manager, Division of Minerals Resources, ADO

--Joe Dygas, Chief, Branch of Solids and Fluids, ADO

--Mike Menge, Chief, Branch of Resource Evaluations, ADO

--Bob Cracknell, Assistant District Manager, Division of Mineral Resources, FDO

Moving in from his position as area manager for the Glennallen Area, Daryl Fish will join the ASO Planning and Environmental Coordination Staff as a program analyst.

John Merrick, long-time area manager of ADO's Peninsula Area will move to the Conveyance's Alaska Railroad Project. Don Hinrichson will replace him as the area manager.

Finally, Mike Wrabetz, environmental planner at ADO, will join ASO's Resources Division as an environmental specialist.

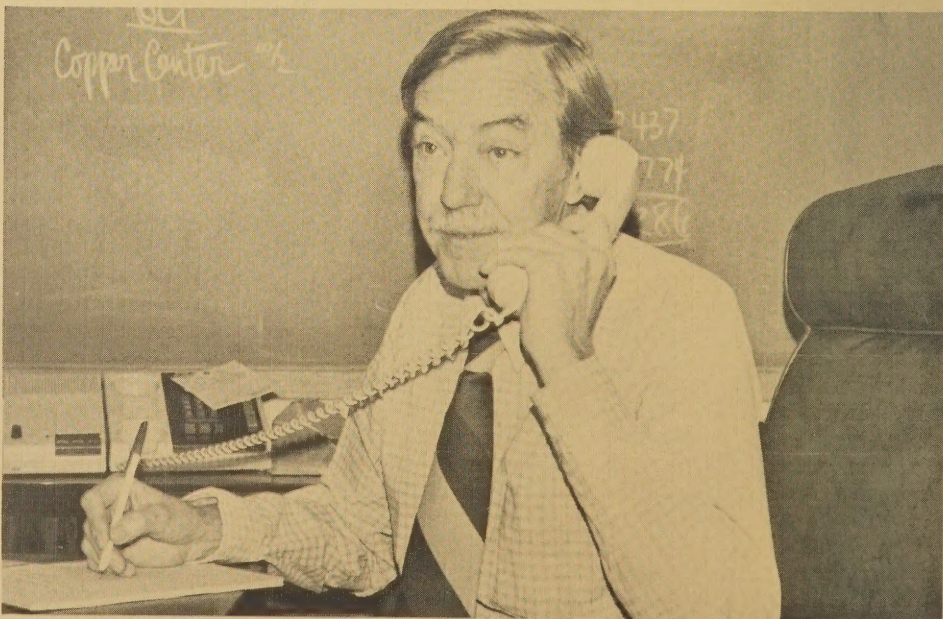
# Thanks to everyone in BLM Alaska

"I greatly appreciate the send-off given me by my BLM friends in January," says Bob Arnold, new deputy commissioner for the Department of Natural Resources. "The kind words and gifts were a nice cap to my BLM career."

Bob says that his new office on the 11th floor of the State Office Building in Juneau is "less grand than my old office" but has two windows giving him a "splendid view" of Gastineau Channel.

As Deputy Director of DNR, Arnold stands in for Commissioner Esther Wunnicke when she is traveling, and he appears before the legislature frequently presenting DNR policies and issues.

Arnold and his family live on Douglas Island. He expects to visit Anchorage once or twice a month and will stop by BLM to say hello.





# Homestead final proof received

BLM received final proof on one of the last homestead applications filed in Alaska, prior to the lands being closed to settlement in March of 1974, according to Curtis McVee, State Director.

"Harold A. White applied for entry on the public lands in April 1973. Because of conflicting applications, he was not allowed to go on the land until August, 1981," McVee said.

During the past century, homesteading played a major part in agricultural settlement of the Western U.S. Under the Homestead Act of 1862, a U.S. citizen could locate up to 160 acres. Generally the homesteader was required to file a homestead location notice, build a home, cultivate at least 1/8 of the land claimed, and live there for five years.

Although settlement laws are still in effect in Alaska through 1986, lands must be identified through the land-use planning process before settlement. In 1982, approximately 10,000 acres were opened in the Minchumina area for 5 acre home and headquarter sites, and 80 acre trade and manufacturing sites.

The Bureau is presently reviewing the status of lands remaining under BLM's jurisdiction for future openings under the homestead laws as well as for lease and sale under the Federal Land Policy Management Act.

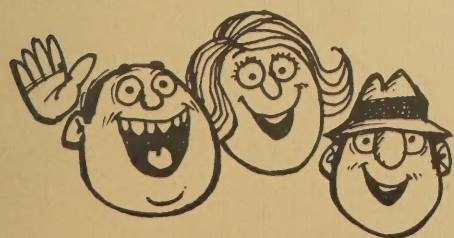


Harold White, left, gives final proof information to Gail Ozmina, chief of Information Services at BLM's Alaska State Office. White's homestead application is in the final stages of adjudication and is one of the last homestead applications on file with BLM-Alaska.

## Salvation Army seeks volunteers to deliver meals

Do you have a lunch hour to spare? Would you like to help your community? The Anchorage Salvation Army is seeking volunteers to deliver lunches to home bound individuals. According to former BLMer Sam McCrady, the program has been cut back because the city cut funding. Salvation Army is trying to develop an "all volunteer" group to deliver lunches.

For more information or to sign up, call Captain David Clitheroe at the Salvation Army, 272-5941.



## Conflicts of interest reminder

A recent investigative case revealed that an employee examined and approved for patent a certain tract of land and two years later purchased a portion of the same land. The seller remembered that the employee had remarked that he might be interested in some land upon which to build a cabin, and approached the employee when he decided to sell.

I am advising all employees involved in realty investigations to be cautious about making statements of personal interest in land transactions. I hope this will avoid not only actual conflicts of interest but apparent conflicts as well. Each of you must be sensitive to the problems which can develop whenever conflicts of interest occur.



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## THE LAST PAGE

# Federal employees celebrate black history month

by Ayn Petty

February was Black History Month. The Bureau of Land Management, the Federal Aviation Administration and Blacks in Government joined together to sponsor films and a display entitled "The U.S. Constitution and the Black American."

Dr. Carter G. Woodson, scholar, author and lecturer, was the founder of the Association for the study of Negro Life and History. He published one of the most influential books in the history of Black America, "The Negro in Our History."

On February 7, 1976, Dr. Woodson organized one of the cultural landmarks of contemporary America, Negro History Week. This week-long observance was expanded to Black History Month in the 1960s. Dr. Woodson said, "This is my proudest achievement." No other single achievement did so much to dramatize the accomplishments of persons of African blood.



Larry Barnes, BIG, Jim Hertell, NWS, Ayn Petty, BLM, and Cassandra Myers, FAA, not shown.

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